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THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

THEME

JESUS MANIFESTED AS THE SON OF GOD.

STUDIES

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JESUS MANIFESTED AS THE SON OF GOD.

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REMARK.—Hostility has reached its climax. Jesus has for the time retired before it. But he comes forth again. Love calls him forth. Love inspires the wonderful deed of power which is to mark the height of his glorification in the sphere of ministry and the beginning of his glorification in the sphere of suffering.

§ 1. Chapter 11 : 1-16.

I. The Scripture Material:

- 1) Vs. 1, 2. Lazarus of Bethany is sick—the brother of Martha and of the Mary who anointed the Lord's feet.
- 2) vs. 3, 4. When word is brought from the sisters, Jesus remarks, His sickness will glorify God in bringing glory to God's Son.
- 3) v. 5. Jesus loved the brother and his sisters.
- 4) vs. 6, 7. And so, on receiving the message, he stays there two days and then calls his disciples to return with him into Judea.
- 5) v. 8. They reply, Why return where the "Jews" recently all but stoned you?
- 6) vs. 9, 10. He responds, Through the twelve hours of daylight one walks without stumbling ; only in the darkness of night does he stumble.

* The outline of the "Division" which is now to be studied is given in advance.

- 7) v. 11. Afterwards he adds, I am going to awaken Lazarus from sleep.
- 8) vs. 12, 13. The disciples, unaware that by sleep he meant death, reply that sleep is what Lazarus needs.
- 9) vs. 14, 15. Jesus says Lazarus is dead and it is best for your faith that I was absent, but let us go now.
- 10) v. 16. Thomas Didymus says, Come on and we will die with him.

2. Lazarus' Death calls Jesus to Bethany : The sisters of Lazarus, Jesus' friend, living in Bethany of Judea, send word that he is sick. Jesus loves this family, and having declared that the outcome of this sickness was to be the glorifying of God in the Son of God, waits two days and then calls his disciples to return to Judea. He replies to their fear of violent treatment by saying, "In the daylight men are able to walk without stumbling. While my time for ministry continues, I can securely labor anywhere;" and then adds, "I am going to awake Lazarus from sleep." The disciples are still reluctant, ignorant that he means that Lazarus is dead, until he tells them plainly and says, "For the sake of your faith, which needs to be strengthened, I am glad that I was not there. But come now." Thomas therefore says, "We may as well go and at least die with him."

3. Re-examination of the Material :

1. Words and Phrases :

- 1) *Noŭ unto death* (v. 4), i. e. death is not the real and final outcome.
- 2) *he abode* (v. 6), why? (a) that Lazarus' death might be undoubted, (b) to test the sisters' faith, (c) to finish his work in Perea, (d) to receive the divine instruction and authorization?
- 3) *two days*, (a) if it took the message one day to come to him, and (b) he waited two days, and (c) it took him one day to return, and (d) when he arrived Lazarus had been dead four days (v. 39), (e) Lazarus had died while the message was on its way to Jesus.
- 4) *the day* (v. 9), the physical day an illustration of man's opportunity to do life's work.
- 5) *walk*, i. e. "live and labor."
- 6) *stumbleth not*, i. e. "is not hindered from doing his task."
- 7) *light is not in him* (v. 10), i. e. he is not self-sufficient beyond his appointed time.
- 8) *for your sakes* (v. 15), i. e. from the point of view of benefit to you.

2. Connections of Thought :

- 1) *The sisters therefore*, etc. (v. 3), i. e. (a) the act of Mary (v. 2), occurring later and known to all, (b) throws light backward upon the intimate relations that existed between this family and Jesus, and (c) in view of these relations, *therefore*, etc.

- 2) *but for the glory of God*, etc. (v. 4), i. e. (a) the real purpose is seen in its being a means to bring glory to God, (b) which is manifested in the glorifying of God's Son, (c) by the miracle which he is to perform and the outcome of it.
 - 3) *now Jesus loved*, etc. (v. 5), is this remark made (a) to show why Jesus returned to Judea (v. 7), or (b) to show why he waited two days, or (c) to guard against the suspicion (from v. 6) of indifference on Jesus' part?
 - 4) *when therefore*, etc. (v. 6), is this (a) he loved them and (b) *therefore* delayed, (c) it was a sign of love to delay, (d) in order to test their faith, etc.?—or (a) the sickness was a means to glorify God (v. 4), (b) *therefore* (though he loved them) in order that it might most fully glorify God, "he abode," etc.?—or (a) because it was for God's glory, and (b) because he loved them, (c) *therefore* (after waiting two days), he returned to Judea (v. 7)?
 - 5) *Jesus answered*, etc. (vs. 9, 10), note the answer, (a) do you fear that my work will come to an untimely end (v. 8)? (b) remember that as long as God has appointed me to work, he will safely guide me, (c) that only when this season ends, will my work be hindered, (d) he was aware that God's time was still continuing and that he would be protected.
 - 6) *the disciples therefore*, etc. (v. 12), i. e. (a) because they misunderstood Jesus, and (b) because they were seeking pretexts for dissuading him from the return, (c) they *therefore* said, etc.
 - 7) *to the intent that*, etc. (v. 15), i. e. (a) Jesus was glad that he was away when Lazarus died, (b) in view of the benefit to the disciples, (c) which would come to them through the development of their faith in Jesus, (d) a development which would be most effectively accomplished by the turn affairs had taken.
 - 8) *nevertheless*, etc., i. e. (a) though I was absent when he died, and (b) this absence is to benefit your faith, (c) *still* it is necessary for us to go to him.
3. Historical Points :
- 1) *Were but now seeking*, etc. (v. 8), (a) cf. 10:22-42; (b) light on the length of the sojourn in this region?
 - 2) *that we may die* (v. 16), (a) note that the disciples recognize the bitter hostility in Judea, (b) their feeling of the hopelessness of the cause, (c) light upon their devotion to Jesus.
4. Geographical Points :
- 1) *Bethany* (v. 1), (a) cf. Lk. 10:38, (b) consider possibility that this may have been the present residence but not the original home of this family, i. e. "of Bethany (sprung) from the village, etc., (c) did Jesus' intimacy with them date from a former residence in Galilee?
 - 2) *Judea again* (v. 7), (a) they are in Perea at present; (b) note that it is "Judea," not "Jerusalem," which is mentioned; why?
5. Manners and Customs :
- Twelve hours*, etc. (v. 9), (a) how does this statement bear on the method of reckoning time in this Gospel? (b) cf. 1:39; 4:6, 52.
6. Comparison of Material :
- 1) On this family at Bethany compare Luke 10:38 in respect to (a) names, (b) individual characteristics.
 - 2) On *Thomas* (v. 16), cf. Mt. 10:3; Mk. 3:18; Lk. 6:15.
7. Literary Data :
- 1) *Lord* (v. 2), for the use and meaning of this word in this Gospel, cf. 4:1 and note.
 - 2) *Thomas called Didymus* (v. 16), significance of this peculiar designation.
 - 3) Consider the marks of an eyewitness in these verses, e. g. in 5 and 6, etc.
8. Review :
- The student may review the work done in 1 and 2 by the aid of this re-examination,

4. Religious Teaching : *The events of life must be measured from other and higher points of view than the present and the visible. That was a superficial view of this event which saw in it only the immediate distress—a view not inspired by the deepest love for man. God's glory and the disciples' faith are truer moments in the estimate of it, and their presence in the mind of Jesus clearly manifests his understanding of its higher significance and his desire that we share his nobler apprehension.*

§ 2. Chapter 11 : 17-32.

1. The Scripture Material :

- 1) V. 17. Jesus arrives and finds that Lazarus was buried four days before.
- 2) vs. 18, 19. As Bethany is near Jerusalem, many "Jews" have come to comfort the sisters.
- 3) vs. 20-22. Hearing of his arrival, Martha meets him, leaving Mary at home, and says, Lord if you had been here, he would not have died, and even now I know that God will answer your requests.
- 4) vs. 23, 24. Jesus replies, He will rise again. She answers, Yes, in the final resurrection.
- 5) vs. 25-27. He says, I am the resurrection and the life ; a believer who even dies shall live, and the living that believe shall never die. Do you believe this? She answers, I believe that you are the Christ to come.
- 6) vs. 28-30. Then she goes and tells Mary privately that the Master is calling her, whereon she quickly seeks him outside the village where he met Martha.
- 7) vs. 31, 32. With the "Jews" who are consoling her at home and think that she is seeking the tomb to weep there, she finds Jesus, falls at his feet, and says, Lord if you had been here, he would not have died.

2. The Meeting with the Sisters : Jesus arrives after Lazarus has been buried four days. Martha meets him with the remark, "This would not be so, had you been here. But your power with God can avail even now." When Jesus promises resurrection to her brother, she understands it only of the final resurrection, but he adds, "I embody the elements of life and therefore of the resurrection. Those who believe in me, living or dead, die only to live forever." Drawing from her the confession that he was to her the Christ with all the meaning of that name, he sends her for Mary, who has

remained at home. Mary, attended by "Jews," friends who had come over from Jerusalem, near by, to comfort the sisters, hastens away, as they think, to weep at the tomb, but really to meet Jesus. She falls before him, saying, "He would not have died, if you had been here."

3. Re-examination of the Material :

1. Words and Phrases :

- 1) *He found* (v. 17), by what means ?
- 2) *Jews* (v. 19), i. e. (a) religious leaders, (b) not all in sympathy with Jesus, (c) light on the social position of the family.
- 3) *still sat* (v. 20), (a) lit., "was still sitting," (b) was she ignorant of his arrival ?
- 4) *ask* (v. 22), used of human petitions, (b) note her conception of Jesus and his relation to God.
- 5) *resurrection* (v. 24), i. e. of the body.
- 6) *last day*, the final consummation of all things.
- 7) *I have believed* (v. 27), i. e. I accepted once and have ever remained firm in the belief.
- 8) *secretly* (v. 28), to avoid letting the "Jews" know it.
- 9) *weep* (v. 31), cf. margin.

2. Connections of Thought :

- 1) *Martha therefore*, etc. (v. 20), i. e. (a) Jesus was coming, (b) "Jews" were present, (c) the latter were not in sympathy with him, (d) *therefore* Martha did not wait for him to reach the house but went to him.
- 2) *Martha therefore said*, etc. (v. 21), i. e. (a) since Jesus had come, (b) after Lazarus had died, (c) *therefore* she said, (d) this would not have happened, etc., (e) is there any reproach in her mind ?
- 3) *and even now*, etc. (v. 22), i. e. (a) you would have saved him, had you been here, (b) *and*, more than that, I know that you always have power with God, (c) implying either (1) your power to save him may be exercised *even now*, or (2) I know even now, in spite of your absence and failure to help us here, you are God's favored one.
- 4) *Jesus said . . . I am*, etc. (vs. 25, 26), i. e. (a) v. 23 (ambiguous) he shall rise, (b) v. 24 (Martha's narrow view) yes, at the end of time, like every other good Israelite, (c) he replies, (1) time has nothing to do with it (*I am*), (2) resurrection is wherever I am, (3) (a deeper fact still) life is wherever I am, (4) so there can be no death where I am, (5) they who are dead (like Lazarus) at once rise again to life, (6) if they believe in me, (7) and they who live (like you), (8) live without dying, (9) if they believe in me, (10) is this your creed ?
- 5) *she saith unto him*, etc. (v. 27) i. e. (a) this is my creed, (b) if it is involved in my firm belief maintained from long ago, (c) that thou art the Christ, (d) with all the power and authority which the Christ is to have.

3. Manners and Customs :

- 1) *Fifteen furlongs* (v. 18), note a measure of length (*stadium*).
- 2) to console them (v. 19), observe Jewish and oriental methods of giving consolation to mourners.

4. Comparison of Material :

- 1) *Resurrection at the last day* (v. 24), look up Jewish ideas of the Resurrection.
- 2) Compare Luke 10:38 sqq. with this passage, noting the portraiture of Martha and Mary given in each, and their harmony.

5. Literary Data :

- 1) *Bethany was*, etc. (v. 18), (a) note past tense of verb, (b) light on date of this gospel, (c) was it written after Bethany and Jerusalem were destroyed ?
- 2) Gather (a) the characteristic words, (b) marks of an eyewitness.

6. Review :

The help afforded by the study just carried on may be applied in a review of points 1 and 2.

4. Religious Teaching : *Jesus the Christ is, and therefore to believe in Him is to enter into His life—a life which cannot know death. With Him there is no future which is not essentially present. Every element, therefore, which is essential to life, abides far above and apart from death's disfiguring and destroying touch.*

§ 3. Chapter 11: 33-44.

1. The Scripture Material :

- 1) Vs. 33, 34. Jesus is deeply moved to see them all weeping and asks where he is laid ; they answer, Come and see.
- 2) vs. 35-37. Jesus weeps. The " Jews " say, How he loved him ; others add, Could not he who gave the blind sight have kept this man from death ?
- 3) vs. 38-40. Jesus, with deep emotion, comes to the cave-tomb, bids them remove the stone from it, and, when Martha says No, he has been dead four days, he replies, I said that, if you believed, you would see God's glory.
- 4) vs. 41, 42. The stone removed, Jesus looks up and says, Father, for thine answer I thank thee ; I knew thy constant willingness to hear me, but, that the multitude about me might believe, I said it.
- 5) vs. 43-45. Then he loudly calls Lazarus forth, and, bound with the grave-clothes, he comes forth. Jesus says, Take them off and release him.

2. Lazarus Restored to Life : The loud wailing of the company arouses in Jesus overpowering indignation which expresses itself in a shudder. With tears falling from his face he seeks the tomb. Some of the " Jews " remark on his love for Lazarus ; others wonder why so famous a wonder-worker as he did not keep him from dying. Again deeply moved, Jesus bids them take off the stone, and when Martha objects because corruption must already have set in, he says,

"Remember, if you believe you shall see God's glory." Jesus, while claiming a constant communion of sympathy with the Father, publicly gives thanks for His favor, in order that the crowd, thus hearing his words, may, when the deed is done, have every reason to believe in his own Divine mission. Then he calls Lazarus forth, and, as he appears, has his grave-bands removed that he may walk freely.

3. Re-examination of the Material :

1. Words and Phrases :

- 1) *Groaned* (v. 33), i. e. was indignant (cf. marg.), (a) at his divine spirit for its impulse to exert its power, i. e. "sternly checked his spirit," or (b) at the weepers, who were many of them only professionally active, (c) at their false views of death, or (d) at the triumph of evil manifested in this death.
- 2) *in the spirit*, i. e. in the depths of his being.
- 3) *was troubled*, (a) cf. marg., (b) perhaps the external form of his inward feeling, i. e. "shuddered."
- 4) *wept* (v. 35), (a) i. e. "tears fell from him," not "wailed," as in v. 33, (b) why did he weep (1) was it real grief at the loss, or (2) sympathy with their grief?
- 5) *thou heardest me* (v. 41), does this imply a prayer? when? cf. v. 4.
- 6) *and I knew that*, etc. (v. 42), shall a pause be made after v. 41, and v. 42 follow as a word to the disciples?
- 7) *I said it*, what, (a) the prayer, or (b) the thanksgiving of v. 41b?

2. Connections of Thought :

- 1) *But some of them said*, etc. (v. 37), observe their argument, (a) he is sorry that Lazarus is dead, (b) his tears show that he is helpless in the presence of death, (c) yet he gave the blind man sight, (d) why could he not have kept this man from dying, (e) did he really give the blind man sight?
- 2) *Jesus therefore again*, etc. (v. 38), i. e. is it (a) because of the manifestation of grief, and of doubt or hostility just witnessed, (b) therefore he was again indignant?
- 3) *Jesus saith*, etc. (v. 40), i. e. (a) Martha was unwilling to have the corruptible body revealed, (b) this showed that she was without hope of any immediate deed of power (cf. the light thrown by this fact on v. 22), (c) Jesus recalls to her mind (1) what he had said in v. 4, (2) his emphasis on her believing his words in vs. 25, 26.
- 4) Study the line of thought in vs. 41, 42, (a) the stone is removed, (b) no sign of corruption is perceptible, (c) Jesus' faith is thereby manifestly indicated, (d) he publicly utters a thanksgiving, (e) after a pause, (f) lest some might think that he had been in doubt about the answer, (g) he says (1) I, for my part, knew, etc., (2) but I uttered the thanksgiving on account of the crowd, (3) that when this miracle had been performed, (4) they might be certain that I, conscious beforehand of my fellowship with Thee, (5) was really sent from Thee.

3. Manners and Customs :

Note (a) the place of burial, etc., (b) light thrown on the social position of the family.

4. Literary Data :

Note the marks of an eyewitness in this section, e. g. vs. 33, 44.

5. Review :

The student may review points 1 and 2 with the results of this re-examination.

4. Religious Teaching : *The sympathy of Jesus with the sorrow of his friends is inseparably associated with his indignation against the power of evil which is the occasion of that sorrow. It is, accordingly, a sympathy both deep and discriminating, going down to the source, but not confounding suffering and sin. It is powerful as well, for it is the sympathy of one who not only knows what sin has done, but who can and does conquer sin in the most terrible of its visible emblems—death.*

§ 4. Chapter 11: 45-57.

I. The Scripture Material :

- 1) Vs. 45, 46. While the "Jews," friends of Mary, there believe on him, others go and tell the Pharisees.
- 2) vs. 47, 48. Thereupon chief priests and Pharisees gather and in council recognize that their leaving him alone to work such signs will draw all men to him and the Romans will overthrow the nation.
- 3) vs. 49, 50. The high priest Caiaphas says, You do not understand how it is best for you, to save the nation from ruin, that one man die for the people.
- 4) vs. 51, 52. These words are prophetic of Jesus' death, which was on behalf of the nation and of all the dispersed children of God.
- 5) v. 53. Thereupon they plan to put him to death.
- 6) v. 54. Then Jesus retires secretly with his disciples to Ephraim.
- 7) vs. 55, 56. As the Passover approaches, many come to Jerusalem to purify themselves, and they look for Jesus questioning whether he will come to the feast.
- 8) v. 57. The authorities have commanded that whoever knows where he is shall tell it, that he may be seized.

2. The Outcome of the "Sign: " The "Jews" visiting Mary are convinced by the "sign," but others report it to the Pharisees. Priests and Pharisees unite in a council meeting, at which fault is found with the inactivity of the authorities, while Jesus is likely to win the nation to his side by such deeds and thus provoke a conflict with Rome which will lose to the nation and the religious leaders what rights they still retain. Caiaphas, the high priest, ridicules their hesitation and stupidity in not clearly seeing that "the best thing for them is to sacrifice Jesus for the welfare of the people"—advice which is unconsciously but really prophetic

of the purpose realized in Jesus' death which was to save and unite God's children everywhere. So they vote to have him killed. But Jesus goes into retirement at Ephraim, and as the mandate had gone forth that all who knew should give information leading to his capture, people coming up to the approaching Passover keep discussing whether he is likely to come up to the feast.

3. Re-examination of the Material :

1. Words and Phrases :

- 1) *Which came to Mary* (v. 45), (a) lit., "the ones coming," (b) i. e. the whole company believed, (c) why is Mary specified?
- 2) *some of them* (v. 46), i. e. some of the "Jews," not Mary's friends.
- 3) *told them*, etc., with any malicious design?
- 4) *chief priests* (v. 47), (a) i. e. Sadducees, (b) unite with Pharisees, (c) are the religious officials.
- 5) *that year* (v. 49), i. e. his career as high priest included that year.
- 6) *ye . . . for you* (v. 50), (a) i. e. for you (Pharisees) on the council who are temporizing, (b) light on the divided feeling.
- 7) *the children of God* (v. 52), are these (a) the dispersed Israelites, or (b) any who by faith reveal their sonship to God?

2. Connections of Thought :

- 1) *And the Romans*, etc. (v. 48), i. e. (a) if all believe in him, they will raise a revolt, (b), *and so* give reason to the Romans for abolishing our privileges.
- 2) *they sought therefore*, etc. (v. 56), i. e. (a) because Jesus had hidden himself, (b) and orders had been given to apprehend him, (c) *therefore* they sought him, (d) what was the spirit of their search?
- 3) *had given commandment*, etc. (v. 57), i. e. (a) Jesus had disappeared, (b) the authorities wished to seize him in his retirement, (c) therefore they commanded that his hiding place be made known.

3. Manners and Customs :

- 1) *a council* (v. 47), (a) i. e. a meeting of the Sanhedrin, (b) cf. note on 7 : 32, (c) note the voting and the edict, vs. 53, 57.
- 2) *high priest* (v. 49), recall his functions and position.
- 3) *to purify themselves* (v. 55), note this custom and its significance.

4. Historical Points :

- 1) *Caiaphas* (v. 49), look up his history.
- 2) Study the action of the council ;
 - (a) compare the ineffectual action of 7 : 32-52,
 - (b) note the intervening period of vacillation and inaction,
 - (c) observe the definite policy here resolved upon (v. 53),
 - (d) consider their first move (v. 57).
- 3) Study the action of Jesus ;
 - (a) the previous retirement and the reason for it (10 : 22-42),
 - (b) the immediate reason for return to Judea,
 - (c) the desire for secrecy in doing this deed of power (vs. 20, 28, 30),

- (d) the purpose frustrated (vs. 31, 36),
- (e) the acceptance of the public test by Jesus,
- (f) the result of the whole affair,
 - (1) trace the development of faith,
 - (2) trace the growth of hostility and its outcome,
- (g) Jesus' recognition from the first of the ultimate purpose (result) of the deed (v. 4).
- (h) the purpose of Jesus' retirement.

5. Geographical Points :

Ephraim (v. 54), its position and surroundings.

6. Comparison of Material :

Consider the absence of any narrative of this deed in the Synoptical Gospels :

- 1) Is it in essence more notable than the raisings from the dead recorded by the synoptics ?
- 2) Does it take its importance largely from its time, place and influence upon the life of Jesus ?
- 3) Is this time, place and influence relatively more important in the plan of this Gospel than in that of the Synoptical Gospels ?

7. Literary Data :

Sum up in this place :

- 1) the characteristic phrases and peculiarities of style in this chapter,
- 2) the marks of an eyewitness—note the brusque manner of Caiaphas, and cf. Josephus B. J. 2 : 8, 14.

8. Review :

With the material which has been worked out on the above re-examination the student may review as before points 1 and 2.

4. Religious Teaching : *There are two things in this episode of Caiaphas which have been united, (1) a divine principle, (2) the use of this principle in the interests of selfishness and malice to destroy the innocent. God accepts the principle and acts upon it. But he brands with shame and contempt the selfish spirit that essayed to use it. Not Caiaphas, who schemed, but Jesus, who submitted, is glorified. You cannot manipulate God's truth for selfish ends and hope to prosper thereby.*